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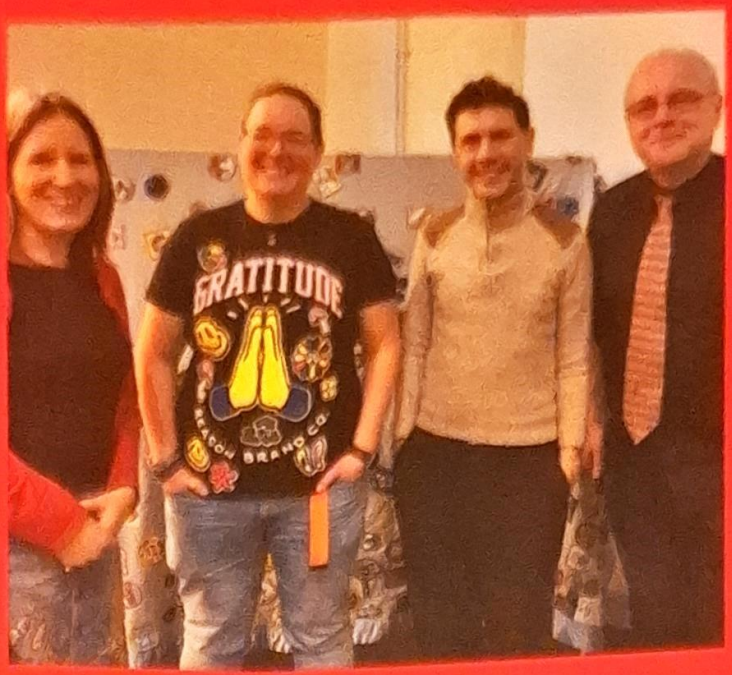
Kirkstall Labour News



A bright future for Abbey House Museum

After a fantastic community campaign to keep Abbey House Museum open, there are exciting plans for its future, developing the theme of it being a museum about play:

- A development plan based on visitor research, public feedback, the views of customers, and the expertise of staff has been drafted and will be shared with the local community later in the year.
- In the meantime, there will be some changes in the Victorian Street over the summer and autumn. Visitors will be able to play shopkeeper, sit in one of the cottages, dress up in the photographic studio and investigate a new police station!
- Discussions are taking place with commercial partners around new opportunities and use of areas of the building. Hopefully something will come of this after the summer.
- Leeds Museums and Galleries (who manage Abbey House Museum and Kirkstall Abbey) and LCC Green Spaces (who manage the parkland on both sides of the A65 around those sites), have agreed to form a joint management board which will meet on a regular basis with input from local elected members – Cllr Hannah Bithell will sit on this board.

- LMG have invested in new racking for existing leaflets at its eight sites, including Abbey House Museum, and have applied to the Community Committees Wellbeing Fund for support in non-digital marketing promoting Abbey House Museum.
- A proposal for brown road signage ('heritage signs') is being developed with the Friends of Leeds City Museums.
- Abbey House Museum is reviewing its opening hours with the intention of opening earlier on Saturdays.

We will keep you updated!

Kirkstall kids say: "Pick up after your dogs!!"

Fiona is having a fantastic time undertaking anti dog-fouling campaigns with children at Hawksworth Wood and Kirkstall Valley Primary Schools. The Hawksworth Wood campaign involves children designing posters to be made into metallic signs to go up in the area and the school Eco Warriors wrote a compelling letter which is going out across the estate encouraging owners to pick up after their pooches. The Kirkstall Valley campaign, with local artist Jack Hurley, involves creating a banner for the school railings and the School Council are writing a letter to be delivered to the streets around the school.

The children are such brilliant environmental campaigners and so enthusiastic about drawing pictures of poo and coming up with great slogans!

Please get in touch if you know of another primary school or community group who may be interested in joining in or developing your own anti dog-fouling campaign.

The best way of stopping dog-fouling is to catch people and report it. Offenders can be fined up to £2,500 and can be taken to court. You can report on the Leeds City Council website or on 0113 222 4444 or email Fiona if you know culprits and want to share information confidentially.

Fighting for you all year round

We champion and advocate for residents, including fighting for policy changes and lobbying for individual issues. We thought it would be helpful to share some of our successes:

- Getting higher housing priority for families so they get rehomed faster.
- Securing temporary accommodation for homeless residents.
- Increased police presence at key spots in the ward that need surveillance.
- Supporting local businesses work together to combat theft from shops, leading to a 93% reduction in this crime.
- Securing amendments to planning conditions to get the best possible development for our community.
- Getting accessible parking spaces painted outside people's properties so they keep their independence.
- Supporting Neighbourhood networks, so they can provide brilliant services to older people in our ward.
- Working with Highways and the Camera Safety Partnership to challenge speeding and secure more enforcement.
- Supporting residents to secure funds and amendments to properties to increase thermal efficiency.
- Helping families around education issues and securing school places.
- Getting repairs to tower blocks and council properties.

Alex Sobel MP

It's a privilege to serve as the Member of Parliament for Leeds Central and Headingley, and I'm pleased to now represent the people of Kirkstall too. Since last year's general election, I've been working hard in Parliament to stand up for our community and deliver the changes we need.

Many of you have shared with me your concerns about renting. With your insights, I've worked with the government to strengthen rights for renters through the new Renters' Rights Bill, which provides stronger protections against evictions and ensures rental properties meet minimum quality standards. I've also introduced an amendment, supported by the government, to stop landlords from asking for more than one month's rent in advance. These are key steps towards fairer and more affordable renting.

I'm also committed to making sure every child gets the best start in life. That's why I support free breakfast clubs in every primary school, so no child starts their day hungry. Families in Kirkstall will also benefit from new limits on how many branded items schools can require as part of the uniform, helping to ease costs on household budgets.

I've also supported the Employment Rights Bill in Parliament which includes measures to end fire-and-rehire, ban exploitative zero-hours contracts, improve sick pay, and ensure day-one rights for parental and bereavement leave. These changes will make a real difference for workers across Kirkstall by providing greater job security and fairer working conditions.

A year on from the election, we've made progress — but there's more to do. I'll keep working with you and our local Labour councillors to deliver the change our communities deserve. If you need to contact me & my team you can reach us on 0113 898 0969 or alex@alexsobel.co.uk

Environmental action days

We a regularly undertake action days where we provide skips free of charge for residents to get rid of unwanted household items. We also door knock the area with the Police, Kirkstall Housing and the Leeds Anti Social Behaviour Team. We recently undertook action days at the Claytons, Grayson Crest and Moor Grange high rise blocks and have the Woodbridges and Hawksworth Wood coming up. Please get in touch if you feel your area would benefit from an action day.

Cllr Andy Rontree and Cllr Fiona Venner

Councillor and MP surgeries and contact details

The Kirkstall Councillors have two surgeries per month alongside food banks in the ward.

We are at St Matthias Church, Burley Road, on the second Tuesday of every month 10-12 and St Andrew's Church, Butcher Hill, on the fourth Friday of every month 10-12.

St Matthias Church (also known as St Matt's as this is the name of the congregation that worships there) is facing onto Burley Road between St Matthias Street and Wolsley Road. The surgery is in the parish centre, which is behind the church and down a long ramp.

If you would like to see us away from these times or venues, you can contact us on the details opposite and we will either deal with your query by phone or email, or arrange to meet you in a public place.

Cllr Fiona Venner 07749 551732
fiona.venner@leeds.gov.uk

Cllr Andy Rontree 07733 206373
andy.rontree@leeds.gov.uk

Cllr Hannah Bithell 07717 415471
Hannah.bithell@leeds.gov.uk

If you wish to contact our MP, **Alex Sobel**, his office number is 0113 898 0969
alex.sobel.mp@parliament.uk

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